Miſcellaneous Reflections:

OR, AN

EVENING's MEDITATION.

A

POEM.

Addreſſed to the YOUTH.

By T. L.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

MISCELLANEOUS

REFLECTIONS.

THE clock ſtrikes nine; the light of day departs;
No longer ting'd with gold yon mountain's top;
See heav'n's bright lamps light up, the planets riſe;
The blackbird, thruſh, and tuneful lark are dumb;
A ſilence univerſal ſeems to reign,
Save the ſoft murmurs of a purling rill,
Which grateful break upon my liſt'ning ear.
— Methinks I view th' inhoſpitable climes
Where Mogul, Cham, or Aſiatic prince,
Or proud Baſhaw, deſpotic tyrants, reign,
Or deſarts wide-extended, burning ſands,
Waſte howling wilderneſſes! dreary ſcenes!
The ſun girt, giant-like, to run his race,
His higheſt altitude attain'd, darts down
The piercing ray, with ſwiftneſs not conceiv'd;

The ſultry ſcorching heat the Indian drives
To ſeek a ſhade beneath the creeping ſhrub.
When weſtern oceans quench the fiery ball,
And ſable evening ſpreads her twilight robe
O'er parched deſarts, and Arabian ſands,
Voracious Monſters quit the hidden den,
Propell'd by hunger, and by nature fierce,
And haunt the clay-built cot for human blood.
The woods reſound the hoarſe, loud, hideous roar,
Whilſt they with terror ſtalk along the gloom
Of ancient Night's domain—The dreadful howl,
The complicated roar of ſavage beaſts,
Not to be equall'd, ſearch all nature round,
Except by man! (moſt ſavage animal!)
The yell of Indians, or, more horrid ſtill,
The cruel; modulated, whoop of war!
That dreadful preſage of a painful death,
Juſt as caprice or vengeance may dictate.
O how my ſoul's convulſed at the thought!
My ſpirits ebb; th' arterial blood is chill'd,
And ſcarce propell'd the trembling ventricle.
Whilſt ſeated here beneath an ancient oak,
That liv'd before my grandſire's pulſe began
To beat, or tenant to a womb his embryo,

Secure

Secure from ruffians, and beyond the reach
Of Indian ſcalping-knives and tomahawks,
To meditate the glories of the ſkies,
To warm my breaſt at yonder glowing ſpheres,
And raiſe life's mercury to *fair*, *ſerene*,
Perhaps, ſome honeſt, harmleſs peaſant, who
Beyond the Algehennies fix'd his tent,
Himſelf aloof, in ambuſh lies conceal'd
Deep in the thicket of a leafy ſhrub,
And, bath'd in tears, hears the departing groans
Of all that's near; the Partner of his toils
And of his joys; the liſping child; the babe
Wrench'd from its mother's arms, and hurl'd to death,
Nor ſpar'd the life of man, nor that of brute.
Blind, indiſcriminating cruelty!
E'en now, perhaps, ſome deſtin'd family,
The wants of nature temperately ſupply'd,
Not with high diſhes, but with ſimple fare,
Swarm round the blaze, ere they reſign to reſt
Their weary limbs, to take a parting glow,
Affrighted hear the dread diſtinguiſh'd voice,
Nor ſtrive t' elude the ſhock they cannot ſhun.
Hail! Britain's favour'd Iſle! thrice happy clime!
Nor lion's den, nor alligator's lake,

Nor devaſtation by tornado ſpread,
Nor ſavage Indian (tho' as cruel men,
Check'd by the laws, if not humanity;
The dread of puniſhment, if not of ſhame)
Within the limits of our Eden found:
No piercing rays deſcend in lines direct;
Cheer'd and enliven'd by an oblique glance,
The ſummer ſolſtice darts the genial beam,
Nor ſcorches here, but maturates our fruit;
With golden varniſh paints the ſwelling grain,
And glorious plenty ſpreads throughout the land.
Penſive I ſit, retir'd from ſtrife of tongues,
Int'reſt's loud clamour, folly's louder ſtill,
Prophanity's hoarſe bawl, and chorus lewd,
Which drown reflexion, conſcience lull to ſleep.
Come ſolitude, thou phyſic of the ſoul,
Purge off the dregs of riot thoughts, and take
The vicious bias off from reaſon's ſcale
Frailty hung on, and cuſtom has confirm'd.
The lonely cell, the deep receſs of groves,
Are ſchools of wiſdom, where momentous truths
Themſelves unfold to contemplation's eye:
Refin'd employment for immortal ſouls.
'Tis ſolitude's the proper focus, whence

We contemplate the riſing wonders of
Almighty Power, and Wiſdom's grand diſplay;
By Uncreated Excellence pourtray'd
On ev'ry object which invites the eye
To gaze with rapture on the rolling ſpheres,
Th' amazing hoſt of twinkling brilliant ſtars,
Which interſperſe the blue ethereal vault,
And decorate th' immenſity of ſpace:
'Tis here to trace th' Almighty in his works;
Stupendous orbs reduc'd to lucid points
By diſtance infinite, and trace the line
In which they roll inceſſant ample rounds,
And, rolling, preach aloud their Author's praiſe.
'Tis here to know ourſelves, to know our God;
With our own hearts commune; commune with God.
And will He dwell on earth? amazing kind!
And will He deign from empyreal ſpheres,
From th' higheſt heavens (condeſcenſion great!)
To caſt an eye on frail mortality,
And in creation's veil himſelf enwrap?
T' impart a feeble glimpſe to feeble worms?
T' enkindle ardour in our abject breaſts?
To raiſe our thoughts, inſpire the mental prayer?
And guide our ſecret wiſh beyond the ſkies?

Am I, a feeble emmet of a day,
Notic'd by Him? I am! I feel the truth;
The glowing ardour heaves my panting breaſt;
And may it vivify, reanimate
My cold, my dead affections, once entomb'd
In worldly luſts, and ſmother'd in the duſt
Rais'd by the active heels of ſenſe, to blind
From duty, peace, and everlaſting gain.
In pleaſing contemplation Wiſdom ſhines,
And Wiſdom infinite! This plainly wrote,
On ev'ry part, on ev'ry object wrote,
Throughout creation's wide-extended field.
The ſtriking glare, endleſs diverſity
Of colours glowing in the flow'ry tribes,
Beyond the ſkill of paltry mimic *art*,
The fragrant bloom of purple hyacinth,
The jonquille, tulip, and auricula;
The ſturdy oak, the lofty tow'ring pine,
The creeping ſhrub, high on the mountain's brow,
From Lebanon, the cedar branching there,
By juſt gradation to the ſmalleſt plant,
Nor ſtop at th' hyſſop which o'er-runs the wall,
Take in the humble lilly of the vale;
Amazing wiſdom ſhines throughout the whole!

The foliage expands, to ſhew his praiſe;
Ambroſial ſweets commix'd perfume the air,
Th' aſcending incenſe from earth's altar rais'd.
Stupendous orbs, the work of Power Supreme,
Perform their ample circuit, wheeling round
The line deſcrib'd by Him, nor devious ſtray
In the wide regions of ethereal ſpace;
With ſwiftneſs nice adjuſted, uniform,
Their revolutions to a point obſerve.
Earth, air, and winds, the tides, their ebbs and flows,
The ſun, the planets, and the ſtarry hoſt,
The whole connect, and every part proclaims
The attribute of Wiſdom. Nor leſs man!
A world in miniature! a microcoſm!
The juſt poſition of his various parts
For uſe and ornament, the purpoſes
Of life to anſwer, and provide his food.
Nor yet omit the grand machinery
Contriv'd within, to ſeparate, digeſt,
Extract the eſſence of the aliment,
To form the chyle, convert it into blood,
Its mazy paſſage through the lacteals,
Its progreſs thence to the ſubclavian vein,
Nay, all the animal œconomy,

The curious texture of the human frame,
The juſt arrangement of the various tubes,
Infinitesimal, compoſing man,
In accents loud proclaim Almighty Power.

Incloſed here within theſe walls of fleſh,
Faint gleams of light break in upon the ſoul,
Thro' inlets which material organs form.

This lower world, this vale of ignorance,
Though day to owls, is gloomy night to man.
Our views but ſhort; theſe views imperfect too!
There's earth between us and the greater light!
Duſt modified! call'd fleſh! Reaſon, that moon
Of ſpirits immaterial cloath'd in clay,
Not always equal, always clear its light;
At beſt but gloomy; ſometimes 'tis eclips'd
By paſſion, int'reſt, prejudice, or pain:
Theſe ſend a cloud of vapours, which obſcure
The but dim light, and make it total dark.

Cauſes approximate; of theſe how few
Short-ſighted mortals juſt diſcern and trace!
Then for a moment wonder, and are loſt!
Nor adequately can define, conceive,
Or how we live, or what the lamp of life,
How lighted, how ſupply'd, or how it burns,

Now free, now clear, now dim, now almoſt dark,
Now leaps in quiv'ring flame, now quench'd by death.
The lamp of life, that pure ethereal flame,
Common to brutes, e'en to the creeping worm,
The mite, and ſmalleſt animalcula
That lie immur'd beneath the clods of earth,
Or, floating, buoy'd up in the atmoſphere,
The ſoul of animals,——its nature what?
Material ſtill, tho' an ethereal flame;
And nought but *matter* ſtrain'd thro' the fine ſieve
Of nature's proceſs——How is this conjoin'd,
Connected with an *immaterial* ſoul?
What ligaments can reaſon here ſuppoſe?
Or how coheſive principles can act?
Or matter's laws reſtrict a human ſoul?
Surpaſſing wonder!——Need we boldly ſoar,
Or try to ſoar, thro' nature's myſtic bounds,
Beyond th' ethereal concave wing our way
Up to the Higheſt, to the Source of worlds,
T' aſſert the weakneſs of a finite mind,
When, dropping into *ſelf*, *we're there but fools?*
Parent of worlds, of univerſe! how weak
Are all conceptions finite beings form
Of infinite perfection! O! what eye

Can pierce th' amazing height, th' amazing depth!
E'en Newton, on the mount of ſcience rais'd,
His ſtudious mind, his philoſophic eye,
Saw but a part of that a part he knew:
Trembling he wing'd his way, his ſoul on fire
With eager expectation, to explore
The riſing wonders in th' amazing ſcene
Of Providence; yet at the utmoſt verge
Of his excurſion 'bove the galaxy,
The opening views of farther, freſh, new ſcenes,
Wider extended yet, amazing orbs,
Unwieldy to the power of ſcience, check,
Repreſs the ardour of th' aſpiring mind;
For at the utmoſt bounds of human ken
Is wrote, *A novice ſtill at infinite.*

A Being ſelf-exiſtent! the ſole ſource
Of wiſdom, power; his attributes divine!
Not only man's, e'en angels tongues fail here:
Before his eye confus'd the Cherub hides,
Nor pureſt Seraph without folly found,
And all the nations of the world a drop!
Finite with Infinite there's no compare.
Loſt in th' attempt to ſcan the Deity,
Our reaſon roves and ſearches, but in vain;

The

The more ſhe roves, the more bewilder'd ſtill.
Like ſilk-worms buried in the ſilk they ſpin,
Reaſon, wrapp'd round and round, lies hid and dark,
Intangled in the arguments ſhe rais'd,
The growth luxuriant of fancy's ground,
Drawn from the ſtock of theologic lore.
The chain that holds creation ſtands defin'd
Concatenation of effect and cauſe;
The Deity beyond the higheſt link:
Far diſtant Infinite from nature's bounds;
Yet ev'ry atom form'd, pervades, ſuſtains,
That lives, or moves, or is! Skill exquiſite
In ſeries infinite appears throughout
The animal and vegetable world.
'Tis but a part we ſee of that vaſt chain
On which ſuſpended all creation hangs,
Offspring of Deity, by him upheld;
Th' efficient and conſerving cauſe of all.
Nor let it ſooth the infidel, tho' man,
Of finite underſtanding, fails to ſolve
Nature's phenomena throughout; nor ſees
The depths of Providence, in every ſtep
To trace him; yet enough we ſee and hear,

Enough we feel within ourſelves, to know
Before the grand primeval day firſt dawn'd,
Or e'er the ſun was made, and hung aloft
In the wide regions of the liquid air,
That God, the unoriginated cauſe,
Exiſted. Where's the Epicure ſo dull,
Or the Lucretian fool, when he perceives
Th' apparent ſignatures of a divine,
Intelligent, ſelf-moving principle,
Diſplay'd around, dares ſtill diſclaim the truth?
A glorious truth! the life, the ſoul of all!
The animating ſpirit of the world.
Without it life is ſcarcely worth a wiſh,
And all its pleaſures but inſipid froth:
The ſun without it beams no chearing ray,
Each bleſſing bears within a hidden ſting;
Of future recompence beyond the grave
No proſpect fair appears. Without a God,
Life's without joy, and death's without a hope.
O! glorious Truth! it is thy energy
That ſooths my ſoul: in all afflictive ſcenes
Thou art my joy; thou art my ſure defence;
When tempeſts riſe, the elements grow black,
When ſun and moon are dark'ned, thou'rt my light,

From

From heat a covert, ſhelter from the ſtorm;
In life my pilot, and my anchor too:
When ſickneſs pale ſits brooding on my brow,
Or hectic fever creeps along my veins,
Thou art my ſtay, my ſtaff, my only hope,
My all in all, the only ſource of good
To man beneath, and cherubim above.
If famine, nakedneſs, or peril, ſword,
Diſeaſe, or pain ſhould be my lot to bear,
May thy complacent ſmile ſupport my ſoul!
Forſake me not, or in life's vale, or death.
Take not thy Spirit from me, I am rich
In poverty; in want am full, am ſafe:
Nor more than this an angel can deſire;
Nor leſs than this thou will'ſt us to accept;
And this my prayer, this my warmeſt wiſh.
Let atheiſts laugh, their laughter I deſpiſe;
I 'wail their folly, let them ſneer at mine.
A God without beginning, without end!
Omniſcient, omnipreſent! O my ſoul!
Be thine the lot, the happy lot, whilſt here
To know *he is*, to read him in his works,
To feel him preſent, to adore his name;
Nor vain, impertinent, preſume to ſcan

The wiſdom, eſſence, of the Deity,
Or ſquare a God by mathematic rules;
Content to leave the ſpeculative *how*,
Conceal'd from man, and foreign to the end
Of his exiſtence in the preſent mode,
Incruſted with theſe elements below.
Yet in a future ſcene (of which frail man
An adequate conception cannot form)
When life's grand engine, muſcular and ſtrong,
Shall ceaſe to play, diffuſe the purple ſtream,
The quiv'ring pulſe a final period make,
And ſend us trembling thro' the gulph of death,
What mortal knows (may I conjecture here?)
What vehicle the ſoul ſhall then inform?
Perhaps a pure, a light ethereal one;
A vehicle refin'd, *all eye*, *all ear*.

Thou great I AM! Thou all-ſupporting Pow'r!
Uncircumſcrib'd, eternal, 'bove all praiſe.
The length, the breadth, the height, the depth to ſhew
Of thy redeeming love, expreſſion fails!
The bleſt effect untutor'd Indians feel;
All, all have heard, tho' all have not obey'd:
From univerſal kindneſs none exempt;

Thou rul'ſt in heaven above, in earth beneath,
The Lord, the King, the Father, Friend of man!
But whither would I ſoar? my active mind,
The more ſhe flutters, more ſhe feels the chains;
Nor can ariſe above the narrow ſphere
Of earth's attraction! What then? wiſh for death?
'Tis ours to wait the time, th' appointed time;
Beg reſignation's aid, in life or death.
All's for the beſt that Providence permits,
Or Wiſdom Infinite allots beneath;
Of Perfect Goodneſs this the gracious ſcheme;
Nor does he e'er afflict, but with this view,
To raiſe his creatures to conſummate joy.
Things ſecret appertain to God, not man:
But things reveal'd, to us, our children too.
The truths eſſential to our peace below,
The truths eſſential to our final bliſs,
Are here reveal'd, wrote on our very ſouls,
As with a ſun-beam——Sun-beam, did I ſay?
Brighter than ſun-beams, with a ray divine.
How frail, how blind, how ignorant is man!
And yet how ſtrong, how wiſe, how proud appears!
His life a ſpan; ſo ſmall the diſtance from
His firſt to laſt; his cradle to his grave.

Diſeaſes

Diſeaſes numerous await his paſs;
Nor can he ſhun, in this ſtrait path to life,
The numerous ills thick-ſpread throughout the whole.
And would he reſt on earth? Kind heaven forbids;
At peril too;——the thorn his pillow here.

Health, riches, fame, and power, precarious goods,
Miſus'd are evils; prove our greateſt curſe.
Proſperity;——this bleſſing proves our bane,
If in its ſun-ſhine wantonly we baſk;
As the bright rays emitted from the ſun,
The wine, a *ſweet*, to vinegar convert.
Then where's our ſhelter? 'Tis *humility*;
Humility, the proper dwelling-place
Of helpleſs, blind, dependent, feeble man.
His beſt eſtate what is it? *Vanity*.
A father's title foul corruption claims;
The abject worm, immur'd beneath the clod
We ſcarcely deign to tread, ſo delicate,
Claims a relation; mother, ſiſter too:
Gaping they wait impatient our return.
Whilſt living on the ſurface of the earth,
Worms riot in us, on our vitals prey;
Like canibals torment us, kill, devour.

O mor-

O mortifying thought to Mira's pride!
This face, this piercing eye, this ſnowy neck,
This hand, as lillies white, this blooming cheek,
This form, by flatterers angelic term'd,
Now ſtripp'd of all the equipage of dreſs!
My caſket leave! nor longer grace a ball!
A lifeleſs putrid lump the grave deſcend!
Mix with the earth beneath me e'en to tread!
O ſhocking! if a truth, let pleaſure veil it.
Come, John, a chair; tranſport me to the play.
O mortifying thought! the miſer's hell;
No bags of gold, nor rent-rolls in the grave.
In quivering flame ſee nature's lamp declines;
Portentous univerſal languor reigns:
The aged hand, of ore already full,
Trembling at once with age and vanity,
Still diſcontented, ranſacks earth for more;
Nor heart to ſpend, nor power to hold it long;
On pelf his dim eyes gazing, dying cloſe.
The ponderous bag Avaro's dead hand drops,
The gaping heir receives the golden prize.
O mortifying thought! and muſt I die?
It ſhocks, recoils! And why then hate the thought?
Hear what ſays Reaſon, Revelation too:

" Time here's uncertain, tranſitory, ſhort;
" This lower world is but a jail at beſt,—
" Contracted, dark; a dreary vale of tears.
" The man who lives to anſwer life's great end,
" Loves God, his neighbour, and fulfils the law,
" Exults o'er death, and triumphs in the hour
" Of nature's diſſolution.——Where's thy ſting,
" O death? and, grave, thy boaſted victory?
" To him how diff'rent then muſt death appear?
" Diſeaſe and pain he meekly bears, as means
" To ope the door, knock off the chains of fleſh,
" And guide th' inhabitant of mould'ring clay
" To perfect freedom, boundleſs liberty,
" To light unmix'd, and everlaſting day,
" With which compar'd, e'en the meridian ſun
" Appears opaque, and all its glory fades."

What then the cauſe man flies the thought of death?
A guilty conſcience, when ſhe whiſpers ſin;
(Sin unrepented of, uncancell'd there)
And writes our imperfections on our face,
The dread inſcription on the whited wall,
Th' exterior part of hypocritic man.
This who can read without a ſickly pale,
Or when, high upliſt, opes the long-wrote roll,

Con-

Containing mourning, lamentation, woe,
Not feel his blood run trembling to his heart?
Hear, O ye epicures, who, deep immers'd
In floods of luxury, miscall'd high life,
Catch at a twig, if any one presents;
Reflect now on your origin, the end
For man design'd; 'tis glory, happiness.
To rise in glory! O transporting thought!
Higher and higher to eternity!
See God's perfections infinite display;
Enjoy those pleasures, pure, refin'd, above
Which man's contracted heart no place affords
E'en to conceive! pleasures for ever new!
When God the object, this the future scene,
How beats the human soul, confin'd in clay!
Within these elements, this nether world,
Compress'd with gross materiality,
She flutters, would extend her wings, and soar,
With unremitted speed, above the stars,
The bliss of Seraphs to anticipate.
Let reason take her scales, and let us weigh
Kingdoms, imperial crowns, and golden mines,
The empty gew-gaws of rich tinsell'd pride,
With all the finery of courts, levees,

Wreaths fame hath wrought to grace a victor's brow,
His name immortalize for ſhedding blood,
All pleaſures man enjoys, or earth affords,
'Gainſt but a glimpſe of beatific joy,
Or a good conſcience, heaven here on earth!
See which preponderates and turns the ſcale,
Celeſtial or terreſtrial glory: then,
Come then, ye epicures, ye worldlings come,
Call out for mercy; Mercy's ear is ope;
He hears, nor only hears, he *hearkens* too:
What condeſcenſion to the penitent!
A glorious attribute! Accept; be ſav'd;
Nor ſtumble at the means; repent, amend:
Regain the man, and live as man ought live.
Is conſcience baniſh'd? She'll again return,
Reſume the ſeat ſhe loſt, aſſert her right,
And cauſe a reſurrection of your ſins.
The ghoſts of man's forgotten vices rais'd,
Will on the death-bed with new dread appear,
And haunt him in the agonizing hour
Of diſſolution; nor will leave him when
The breath of life ſhall quiv'ring take its flight;
Nor, only here, hereafter will torment,
Complete the hell they had begun on earth.

With

With a diſtinguiſh'd blaze this attribute
Enlightens, warms, enlivens drooping man:
Of hope and confidence the only ground,
T' avert the ſentence juſtice would diſpenſe.
Suppoſe th' Omnipotent, the Sovereign Lord
Of all creation, now were to appear
In fiery clouds of juſtice rigorous,
To execute eternal vengeance on
The million heaps of proud rebellious worms,
What fleſh could ſtand before th' incenſed God?
The heavens gather blackneſs at the thought,
A paleneſs man, and, trembling, ſeeks to hide.
Before him went the peſtilence of old;
He lightly touch'd the mountains, and they ſmok'd;
He blew on Lebanon, it was conſum'd;
Forth from his feet went burning coals of fire;
He meaſur'd earth, aſunder nations drove;
The hoary heads of aged mountains bow'd;
Hoarſe, loud, and dreadful roar'd the bellowing deep;
The ſun and moon affrighted, ſtood aghaſt,
Struck with the luſtre of his glitt'ring ſpear!
But is there mercy ſtill?———
There is: ſtupendous thought! Immanuel,
That pool tranſparent, lucid, open'd in

The

The vale of time: and this, O glorious truth!
At once a pool, a Shiloh's pearly ſtream,
Ancient and new, ſilent and ſoftly glides,
For ever clear, and undiminiſh'd too;
As yeſterday, to-day; for evermore
Remains the ſame. A *river?* 'tis a ſea,
Immenſe extended, and immenſely deep,
Unfathomable to the longeſt line
Of human reaſon, or pure intellect,
Of winged Cherubim or Seraphim.
What love is this! 'Tis felt, but not expreſs'd.
A Being ſelf-ſufficient and intire,
Perfect and glorious throughout his name,
Amazing thought! to notice poor proud man,
A helpleſs, boaſting, grov'ling, abject worm.
In his immenſity of mercy loſt,
Our reaſon, paſſions rude, to ſilence huſh'd,
The ſoul enraptur'd breathes unfeigned praiſe.
And praiſe a ſong too high to modulate
In vocal quivering accents, mental praiſe,
A melody of an angelic kind.
But is there mercy ſtill? There is. The Lord,
Th' Almighty Parent of the univerſe,
Calls loud to poor deluded ſons of earth,

Pur-

Purſuing phantoms, as ſubſtantial joys,
To quit the ſtriſe of tongues, and to withdraw
From din of petty int'reſts, powerful banes!
The noiſe and clamour of miſguided crowds,
The feaſt of libertines, empty parade!
A pompous, oſtentatious pride of fame,
Deriv'd from beings fooliſh, weak, and vain,
Short-ſighted creatures! nor can pierce the heart,
The deep receſs where pride and intereſt lurk;
But falſely eſtimate, at tranſient view,
The real worth of men by painted garbs.
The epicure, the meaneſt ſlave to ſenſe,
Who, like the ſwine he nearly imitates,
But wakes to luſt, drinks deep at the foul trough,
Grunts, ſtaggers, drops, and ſleeps to ſhame again.
Nor theſe forgot; by heaven's moſt gracious call
Awak'd they are (for all have heard the ſound)
But wake, and ſtare, and beg to ſleep again!
Come, ſleep, thy poppies ſhed around my bed;
Invite my ſenſes to th' inchanted ſcene;
This voice that rouſes brings me no good news;
It interrupts my train of golden dreams;
It pours reflection's horror on my thoughts;
The keen vibrations of important truths,

Too ſoon they viſit on the ſtage of joy.
Come, ſleep a little more, and longer yet;
The veil of darkneſs ſuffer to eclipſe
The naked truth, too ſtrong for ſenſual eyes:
At leaſt a ſlumber's leſſer aid I beg,
To ſooth the pain of conſcience ſo acute.
Come, riſing generation, deep immers'd
In bellowing waves of paſſion; mounted high
On folly's giddy heights, ideal joys,
Look down the precipice, the gulph of death,
And look beyond, look to the gulph beneath.
Come, riſing generation, leave the ſtage,
The club of lewdneſs; to the houſe deſcend
Of dying infidels: behold the King
Of every terror ſitting on their brow!
The friend may weep, but cannot help; in vain
He would allay the agony of ſoul;
Yet can't repreſs the inward heart-felt pang,
The complicated weight of death and ſin.
Come, riſing generation, now aſcend,
And ſee the King of terrors wear a ſmile:
See how the good man meets the ſhock of death,
Welcomes the meſſenger, and bids adieu

To all his family around his bed,
Dries up their tears with, *All is well with me.*
Take his example, ſmooth the rugged vale;
Death will be then a glorious path to life.
But when to ſmooth it? In the day of health:
'Tis our great buſineſs, 'tis our happineſs;
Th' important work at peril left undone.
Conſider then the end, the glorious end
Of your creation, and purſue the means;
Fill up the duty Heaven has aſſign'd,
Nor quit your poſt; an enemy is near:
'Tis youthful luſts that war againſt the ſoul,
Cloud reaſon's eye, and wound e'en while they pleaſe.
Let's then aſſert the dignity of man,
Nor meanly truckle to our appetites,
The impetus of grov'ling brute deſire;
Aſſert our dignity, and reign as kings,
Intelligent, free ſpirits, cloathed with
An angel's nature, immortality,
Tho' for a moment cloathed with a worm's;
Offspring of Deity, the ſons of God;
A higher title can man wiſh to wear?
A lower then ſhall man ſtoop to acquire?
Forfeit his glory, and relinquiſh man?

Come, riſing generation, take the field,
Nor make delay; duty demands diſpatch,
And int'reſt urges too; they're both connect,
Man's duty and man's real happineſs.
Make no delay, eternity's the prize;
Eternity of pure celeſtial joy.
Be always ready, and be always ſafe.
Truſt to the morrow? This a dreadful riſque!
Morrow may be eternity to thee?
The day, the hour, the awful moment, when
Our frame ſhall fall, no prudence can foreſee.
What folly then in man to truſt to health,
To ſtrength of nerves a moment may unſtring!
A moment parts th' attenuated thread,
Diſſolves the vital bond of preſent life.
Omnipotence! he ſpoke; Let Us make man:
The particles of duſt aſſembled; then
Coher'd together, and a ſyſtem fram'd,
A vehicle for intellectual life,
A dreary priſon to th' immortal ſoul;
And at his nod the homogeneous maſs
Will quick appear a putrid ghaſtly lump,
Diſſolve and crumble into duſt again;
For duſt thou art, and ſhalt to duſt return.

This vehicle, with complicated threads
Tho' wove and interwove ſo accurate,
Obnoxious ſtill to thouſand different ills,
Diſeaſe and death can enter ev'ry pore;
And theſe in millions which our clay o'erſpread
At once the avenues of life and death;
Nor riches, power, nor wiſdom can exempt
E'en *Alexanders* from the debt of death.

See, ſilent monitors, the ghaſtly corpſe
Of neareſt relative, or boſom friend,
Cruſh'd by ſome heavy apoplectic ſtroke,
Or by a febrile heat intenſe conſum'd,
Or other engines death ſucceſsful plays
Within the limits of theſe elements,
To bring down princes from exalted thrones,
With ſimple peaſants *humble to the duſt.*
Did I ſay ſilent? No, they preach aloud;
In reaſon's ear inſpire important truths:
Be always ready; this the dead man's text,
Voice of religion, and of common ſenſe.
Why weep for me? You weep for me in vain:
Weep for yourſelves, weep for your children too.
We hear the ſolemn language of the dead,
We ſtrew their grave with tranſient burſts of tears,

Say, Ah, he's gone! I knew him in life's bloom!
The thought of death, like electrific touch,
Our nerves a moment ſhudder, and 'tis o'er;
Impute the ſhock to a mechanic fear:
So fooliſh vain and inconſiderate man!
What! do we ſtart at death? and are we ſhock'd?
Another truth, and yet more ſolemn ſtill,
Dreadful, important, intereſting too;
To whom? The ſenſualiſt; to him a hell;
The day of judgment! Haſt thou never heard?
Then why fly back? or, hearing, haſt thou thought?
Or, thinking, haſt prepar'd againſt the day,
The ſcene ſucceeding death, alarming moſt,
Or ſhould alarm before it does arrive?
The Judge enthron'd! angelic myriads round!
The long-deſpis'd, neglected volume op'd,
The book of conſcience! Regiſter'd are there
Our actions, words, our thoughts; th' ſprings of all
From mortal eye ſecreted, here are wrote:
Theſe read aloud, e'en infidels muſt hear,
And hearing, tremble at the dread report.
Not guilty, vain to plead; we're naked, bare;
Diſcriminating Juſtice ſees our hearts;
One glance explores them; and the priſoner's face,

Pale-

Paleneſs already gather'd, ſelf-condemn'd,
Flaſhes confuſion, horror, and deſpair.
— Be wiſe in time; eternity's too late.
From life's gay ſtage deſcend, and enter deep
Into thyſelf; commune with thine own heart,
Not taking ſenſe but reaſon for thy guide,
And reaſon with a ray divine illum'd;
Nor conſcience lull with Creeds and Peter-pence;
Nor let ſelf-love juſt judgment warp: ſelf-love
The cauſe we err; remove this cauſe, and then
Th' effect will ceaſe. But that's ENTHUSIASM.
This monitor is hiſs'd from off the ſtage;
To wit and gaiety his ſubject's dull;
Nay truth is baniſh'd from their very thoughts:
Liars are entertain'd, believ'd, ador'd;
And lies the liars only refuge here.
The reaſon aſk, if reaſon can be giv'n;
Error, deluſive, dark, the multitude
To light of truth prefer. This folly's height.
O thou, Supreme, Firſt Cauſe, Omniſcient God!
Whoſe fainteſt glance takes in th' immenſe of ſpace,
Hold up truth's mirror to my feeble eye,
Nor let a ſingle blemiſh lie conceal'd

In ſelf-love's ſhade; lay bare to open view
The depth of all deception in my ſoul;
Nor let me barely truſt to names, to creeds,
Births inſtantaneous, deluſive boaſts
Of mere enthuſiaſt, fanatic zeal,
Whom yet I pity, tho' I can't approve:
The lurking thought of int'reſt baſe expel;
Let honeſty the ſingle motive reign
To guide my thoughts, my words, my actions all.
The taſk be mine, I aſk nor more nor leſs,
An humble, thoughtful penitent, to tread
The lonely path of virtue; nor regard
The ſneer of libertines, the ſcoff of fools:
And whilſt this vale of life I ſteal along,
A better country may my views direct;
Nor murmur here; what Providence permits
With patience bear, and then reſign my breath,
My ſoul to Thee, its Author, in full *hope*
(Nor, vain, preſumptuous in thy mercy truſt)
To mingle with th' angelic hoſt on high,
With harmony the hallelujah ſing.
What if affliction be the ſcene beneath,
Diſeaſes numerous depreſs my ſoul;

What matter, ruſſet-clad, or dignify'd
With titles and a ſtar, puff'd with fame's blaſt,
Or lolling in a coach with coronets,
And equipage's train; a glaring ſhew!
Time's moments few and fleeting; ſoon they paſs,
And in the grave diſtinction is forgot:
One common lot the king and peaſant ſhare.

FINIS.

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